

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A video card game machine (1) comprising:

a visual display unit (2);

a user control panel (3);

acceptance means (5) to receive an input payment from a player to allow the machine to be operated; and

a control unit comprising: means for directing the playing of a game by displaying, face-up and face-down, a plurality of cards; and means for changing a face down card to a face-up card; and

means (4) for awarding prizes;

characterised in that:

the control unit comprises: means for displaying, face-up with the indicia thereon visible, a first number of winning cards;

means for displaying face-up a second number of continuance cards;

means for displaying face-down a further number of gaming comparison cards;

means, on a player operating the control panel, to cause one of the gaming comparison cards to be displayed;

means for comparing the displayed comparison card with each of the winning cards;

means for indicating that a prize winning comparison has been achieved;

means for determining a prize to be awarded on a game winning comparison being achieved;

means to deliver the prize to the player;

means for comparing the displayed comparison card with each of the continuance cards;
means for indicating that a game continuance comparison has been achieved ;
means for indicating that at least one further free use of the gaming machine can be made
without the need to provide further payment ;
means to allow such use to take place ;
means for terminating the game if no further free use of the gaming machine is displayed;

2. (Original) A video card game machine (1) as claimed in claim 1, in which the control unit comprises means to allow the player choose which gaming comparison card is to be displayed.

3. (Currently Amended) A video card gaming machine (1) as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, in which means are provided to display to the player the number of remaining free uses of the gaming machine allowed arising out of one or both of a game continuance comparison and a game winning comparison has been achieved.

4. (Currently Amended) A video card game machine (1) as claimed in ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1, in which the means to deliver the prize to the player comprises:

means to display at least two different choices of prize to the player;
means to allow the player choose the prize; and
means to receive the choice and deliver the prize subsequently.

5. (Currently Amended) A video card gaming machine (1) as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ ~~claim~~ claim 1, in which the means for terminating the game includes means for displaying all the remaining face down cards.

6. (Currently Amended) A video card game machine (1) as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ ~~claim~~ claim 1, in which the acceptance means (5) comprises one or more of: a keypad to accept an alpha numeric code; a coin/token release mechanism; and a credit/debit card acceptor means.

7. (Currently Amended) A video card game machine as claimed in ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1, in which the acceptance means comprises means to dispense coins and/or tokens.

8. (Original) A method of operating a video card game machine comprising:
means for directing the playing of a game by displaying face-up and face-down a plurality of cards;
means for changing a face-down card to a face-up card; and
means for awarding prizes;
the method comprising:
displaying face-up with the indicia thereon visible, a first number of winning cards;
displaying face-up a second number of continuance cards;
displaying face-down a further number of gaming comparison cards;
the player causing one of the gaming comparison cards to be displayed face up; and
if one of the following events occurs, proceeding as laid out below:

(d) the gaming comparison card matches one of the winning cards, providing a prize for the player;

e) the gaming comparison card matches one of the continuance cards and then allowing the player to continue the game at least one more time by causing a further game to be played; and

f) the gaming comparison card does not match any of the displayed cards and the game is terminated.

9. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 8, in which on providing a prize, the player is afforded the option to continue the game by causing at least one more gaming comparison card to be displayed.

10. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim ~~8 or 9~~, in which there are five winning cards and three continuance cards, with five gaming comparison cards.

11. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim ~~8 or 9~~, in which there are five of each set of cards.

12. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 8 to 11~~ claim 8, in which when occurrence (a) arises and there are at least two comparison cards left to be played, the player is allowed have two more games.

13. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 8 to 12~~ claim 8, in which when occurrence (a) arises, the player is given two chances to continue to play the game and a prize.

14. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 8 to 13~~ claim 8, in which the player may elect to reject the prize and double a future prize if obtained.

15. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 8 to 14~~ claim 8, in which the prize is a multiple of the amount of money paid to play the game.

16. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 8 to 15~~ claim 8, in which on occurrence (a) arising, the player is afforded the option of rejecting the prize and betting the prize on winning a prize on the next play of the game, the control unit offering odds against the occurrence.

17. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 16, in which on the player electing to bet, the machine displays the odds.

18. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 12, in which the odds are randomly chosen from a database of odds.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer program comprising program instructions to cause a computer to provide the means for carrying out the invention as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1.

20. (Currently Amended) A computer program comprising program instructions for causing a computer to carry out the method of ~~any of claims 8 to 18~~ claim 8.

21. (Currently Amended) A computer program as claimed in claim 19 ~~or 20~~, embodied in a computer memory.

22. (Currently Amended) A computer program as claimed in claim 19 ~~or 20~~, embodied in a read-only memory.

23. (Currently Amended) A computer program as claimed in claim 19 ~~or 20~~, carried on an electrical carrier signal.

24. (Currently Amended) A computer program as claimed in claim 19 ~~or 20~~, carried on an optical carrier signal.